

Amendments to the Specification:

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 7, line 15, with the following rewritten paragraph:

As used herein, the term “dynamic aperture mask” means a mask having an aperture located at an objective aperture which, ~~when continuously moved~~ limits the area of the objective aperture through which light passes to only a portion of the objective aperture, and means that can continuously move the mask relative to the objective aperture at which it is located, which causes the portion of that objective aperture that passes light to continuously change and thereby continuously change the angle of illumination to create motion parallax.

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 8, line 8, with the following rewritten paragraph:

Referring to Figure 5a, an array ~~27~~ 30 of light-emitting diodes (LEDs) ~~28~~ 32 is located at an objective aperture 29. The diodes ~~28~~ 32 are controlled by control (switching) system 31 to create light patterns and sequences that continuously change the portion of the objective aperture (condenser aperture) through which light is emitted. The array ~~27~~ 30 can be controlled to produce a sector- shaped light pattern that rotates about the optical axis of the aperture 29 or any other beam that can be moved continuously to create motion parallax.

Replace the paragraph beginning at page 10, line 24, with the following rewritten paragraph:

A drive gear 89, driven by a gear motor and shaft 91, engages the perimeter 92 of turret 81, enabling the turret 81 to be rotated about its axis 93. The drive gear 89 can thus position the turret 81 to align any of the masks ~~82~~ 83, 84, 86, 87 or iris 88 with the aperture 80 of lens 82, as desired. Positioning turret 81 by hand is, of course, also an option. The alignment of a dynamic aperture mask with the objective aperture 80 of lens 82 also aligns the aperture mask with an aperture mask drive gear 94 for rotating the aligned mask. This embodiment permits the easy selection of one of a variety of different dynamic aperture masks for use as the need arises. The shape of each dynamic aperture can be designed for specific applications, such as phase contrast microscopy. Referring to Figure 9b, a mask 95 on turret carrier 81 has an aperture 95a in the shape of a portion of a phase annulus. By rotating the phase annulus aperture 95a, 3-D phase contrast effects are achieved. The other masks illustrated provide apertures for use with different NA lenses and different shaped annuli.